



HOM was able to locate and interview John Savage, whose photos many bondage fans will remember from the early 1970s. John was kind enough to cooperate with us in producing a two-volume retrospective of his work. We will be publishing the second issue later this year, and hope that these issues will be of value to collectors everywhere.

The Bondage Photography of John Savage

VOLUME ON

AN HOM PUBLICATION

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About John Savage

John Savage lives in Newport Beach, California with his wife, a daughter, and two large wolf-like dogs.

Born in Los Angeles on August 25th, 1943, he has lived in California almost all his life. He is an inch short of six feet in height. A Van Dyke beard and bushy eyebrows give him a sinister look when he is serious; but he is quick to smile and is surprisingly soft-spoken. He can converse on a surprisingly wide range of subjects. When asked about his IQ, he would only reply that he was a member of Mensa.

His home reflects his many interests in fields far removed from bondage and discipline. A large telescope sits in one corner of the den and he admits to being an amateur astronomer when time permits. A trophy shows that he fenced in college. A micro-computer sits on his desk, and a perusal of the records and tapes by the stereo reveals an interest in folk music, jazz, and a good sampling of classical.

In 1967 he was drafted into the Army. After being discharged, he worked as a programmer. It was during this period that he began selling his bondage photos and began his association with Tao bondage publishers as an editor and chief photographer.

In 1970 he returned to college. Hs continued as editor and photographer for the magazines, sometimes shooting between classes. In his sernior year he met his wife-to-be, Monique, who was then a freshman.

After graduation he continued shooting and writing until late 1974. During that four year period John Savage provided the work that helped alter the entire bondage publication field. His style of realistic bondage made a strong impact on others. For a long time there had been little new material that the bondage enthusiast could call good. John Willie had stopped producing in the early sixties and Irving Klaw a short time later. Now there was a man shooting photos that brought back the feeling of strict helplessness found in John Willie's often reprinted photos. When John Savage finished tying a girl, you knew she was helpless.

Along with the exciting artwork of Bishop, John Savage's photos marked a turning point in the B&D publishing field. Quality material was being put out by someone who understood bondage on a personal level. Many magazines began copying the John Savage style.

His future plans include continued freelancing photographs occasionally but probably never returning to the field full time. He has done some experimenting in bondage videotapes and hopes to produce some full-length video movies.







HOM: How did you get started in the professional side of B&D?

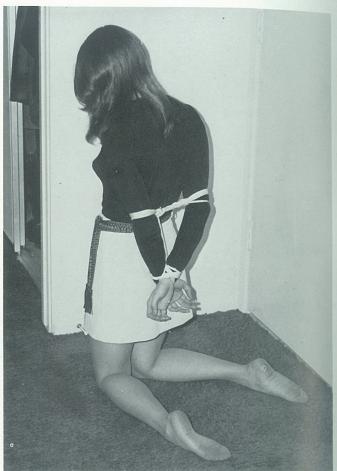
SAVAGE: One day I was in an adult bookstore in Hollywood and I happened to make a comment about some bondage photo packs on sale there. A few weeks later I was in the same store when the clerk told me that he had repeated my comments to the man who made the sets. That man wanted me to contact him. The man was Bill Archer and I shot my first commercial photo sets for him.

My first few sets were distinctive mainly by their poor technical quality. I was just learning photography.

After I shot a few photo sets of my own, luck stepped in to what probably would have been a short career. An adult bookstore owner was thinking about starting up a bondage magazine, but he didn't know how to tie or anything about the field. He noticed a couple of my photo sets in his store and got in touch with me. With he as the publisher and me













as the editor, photographer, and writer, we put out the first two issues. The early magazines were rather crude. They were just photos with a short story stuck in between. The story didn't even go with the photos.

But apparently people liked the bondage because they sold fairly well. That was over ten years ago. I understand that the early issues have become collector's items.

HOM: Many people have said that your photos show a deep understanding of bondage. Does that come from a personal involvement in the field?

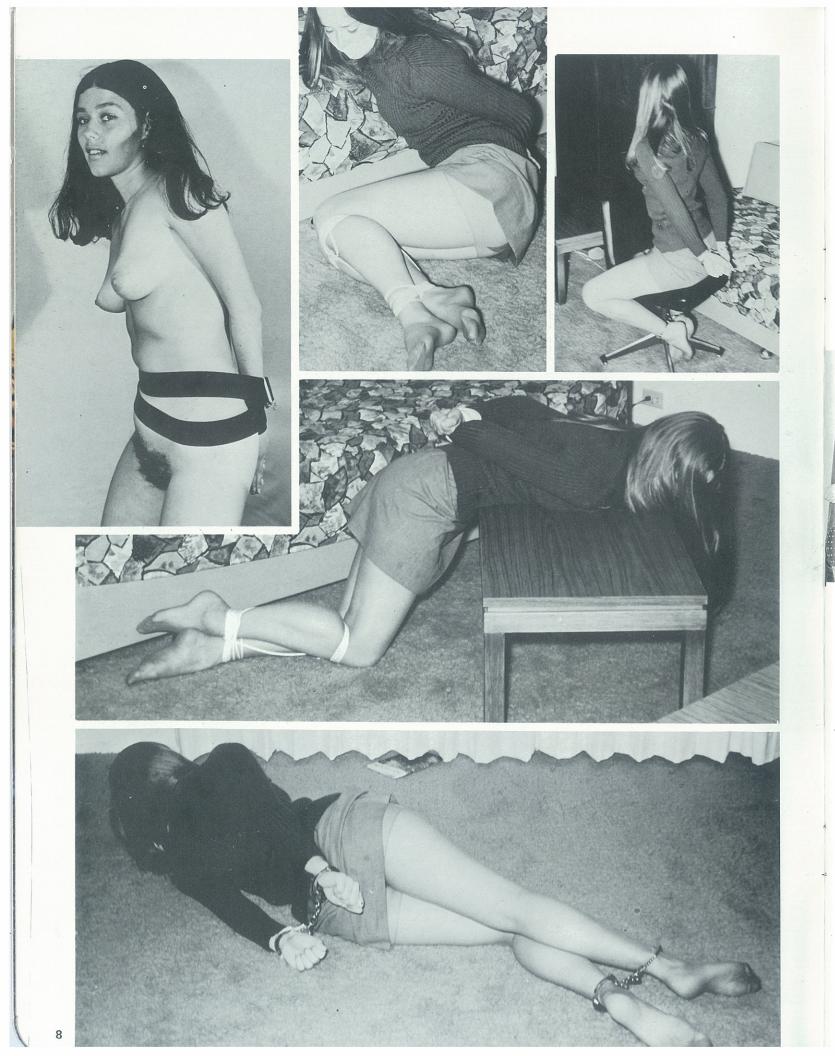
SAVAGE: Yes. I've known many people in the bondage publishing field and the only ones who could put out a good product were those with a personal interest. In order to be able to create a fantasy in photographs and writing you must first be able to fantasize it in your own mind.

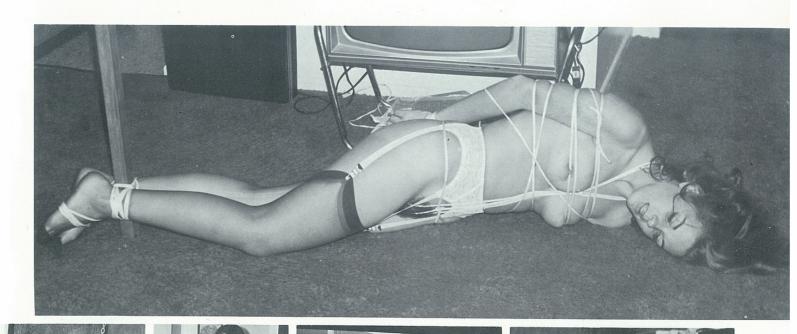
I enjoy beautiful women bound helplessly in tight ropes and always will.

HOM: You've been photographing women in bondage professionally since 1969 and privately before that. Do you know how many photographs you've actually taken?

SAVAGE: I really don't know. A rough count of negatives once came to









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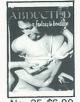








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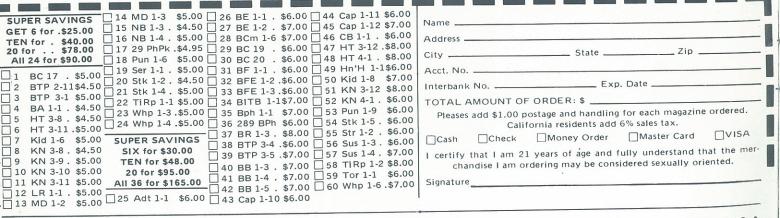
















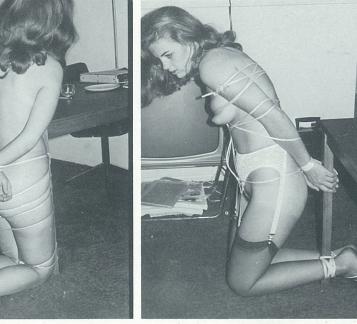
just over 4000 but I've shot many more since then. HOM: What do you use for locations? Most of your photos don't look as if they

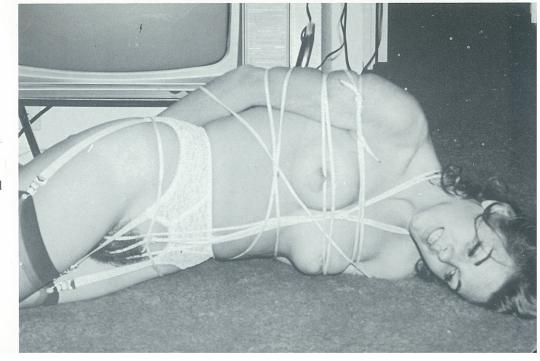
were shot in a studio. SAVAGE: All the early photos were shot in whatever apartment I happened to be living in at the time. When I began with magazines, professional studios were sometimes used. For awhile some of my photos looked as if they were shot in a warehouse. Actually, that was an office in Hollywood. Since that period most of the shots were taken in private homes, many

of them in my house. HOM: Have you worked with any of the famous people in the field?

SAVAGE: I've met a few. F.E. Campbell, the novelist, comes to mind. We've worked together on a few photo sessions for HOM. His writing is very good. In fact, I would have to say that he reflects a greater understanding of the nature of B&D and S&M than any other author.

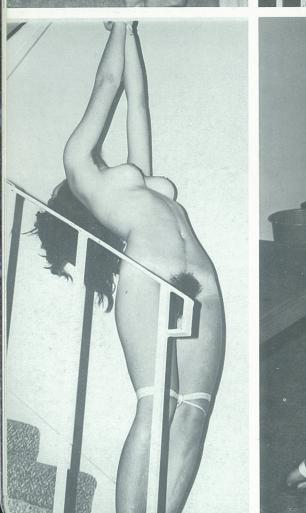
Of course, there is the Bishop. I've had the pleasure of working with him on many photo sessions and some movies. It was hard work. But it was fun too. And I think we produced a couple of superior bondage films.













Bishop is a talent that I admire, both as an artist and as a humorous and satirical writer. Generally he restricts his writing to story lines and dialogue for his drawings and other illustrations, but there is a great deal of wit and the rare ability to mix humor with B&D.

I've worked with some others who were and are important people in the field, but who aren't well known because they don't publish their names.

HOM: Did you know John Willie?

SAVAGE: Unfortunately, no. For a short period in the early sixties we both lived in Los Angeles but I didn't know that then. I had seen and admired his work, and would have enjoyed meeting the man. I think most of his fans would. But at that time I didn't know who had made those photos. I didn't get into the field professionally and begin to meet the people behind the scenes until 1969.

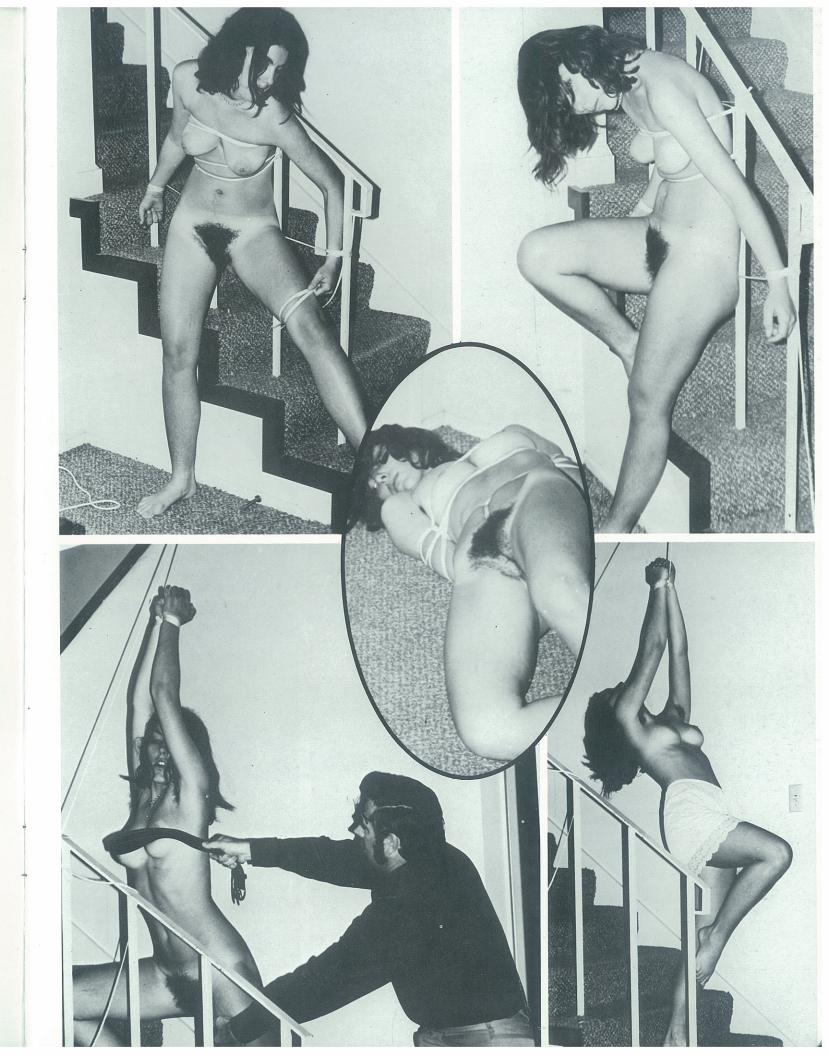
HOM: Have you ever appeared in any published photos?

SAVAGE: Not many. Since I have a professional career outside of the B&D field, it has always seemed better not to. There are many shots of my arms and hands tying a knot here or grabbing a breast there, but I've tried to keep myself out of the picture, and, considering my looks, that is probably the kindest thing I can do for the readers!

HOM: Many of the women in your photos don't look like professional models. They're pretty enough, but many people have commented that they seem more like the girl next door than a polished Hollywood model. Where do you get your models?

SAVAGE: The majority of my models were Hollywood-type professional models but there is a high percentage who weren't professionals. I began my photography career while I was still an undergraduate at college. Most of the girls from that period were just college co-eds who I talked into picking up a few extra dollars by modeling. And a couple were my girlfriends who did it because they enjoyed it.

After graduation there was a period where I was shooting only professional models. We were trying to put out a magazine a month and that takes a steady stream of models. In recent years my freelancing has been using mostly girls









who are really into bondage. My wife and I have been meeting with many couples and some single girls, and that's how we find girls who enjoy bondage on a personal level.

If I was able to take a professional model and make her look like the girl next door — a very sexy girl next door — then I've accomplished my goal.

As I've said before, I'm trying to create fantasies that people can associate

HOM: How much do your published photos reflect your private bondage style?

SAVAGE: To a fair extent. The photos I shoot for magazines are set up with a consideration for the visual impact for the general public. What I do in private is meant to be visually pleasing to me and emotionally pleasing to the girl in the ropes. Sometimes there is a difference, but generally not too much.











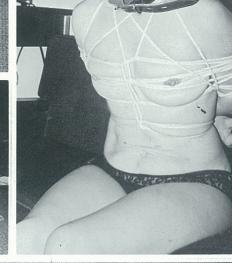




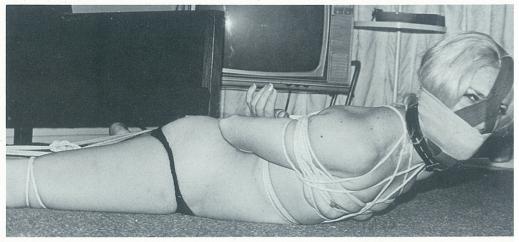








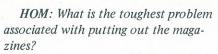












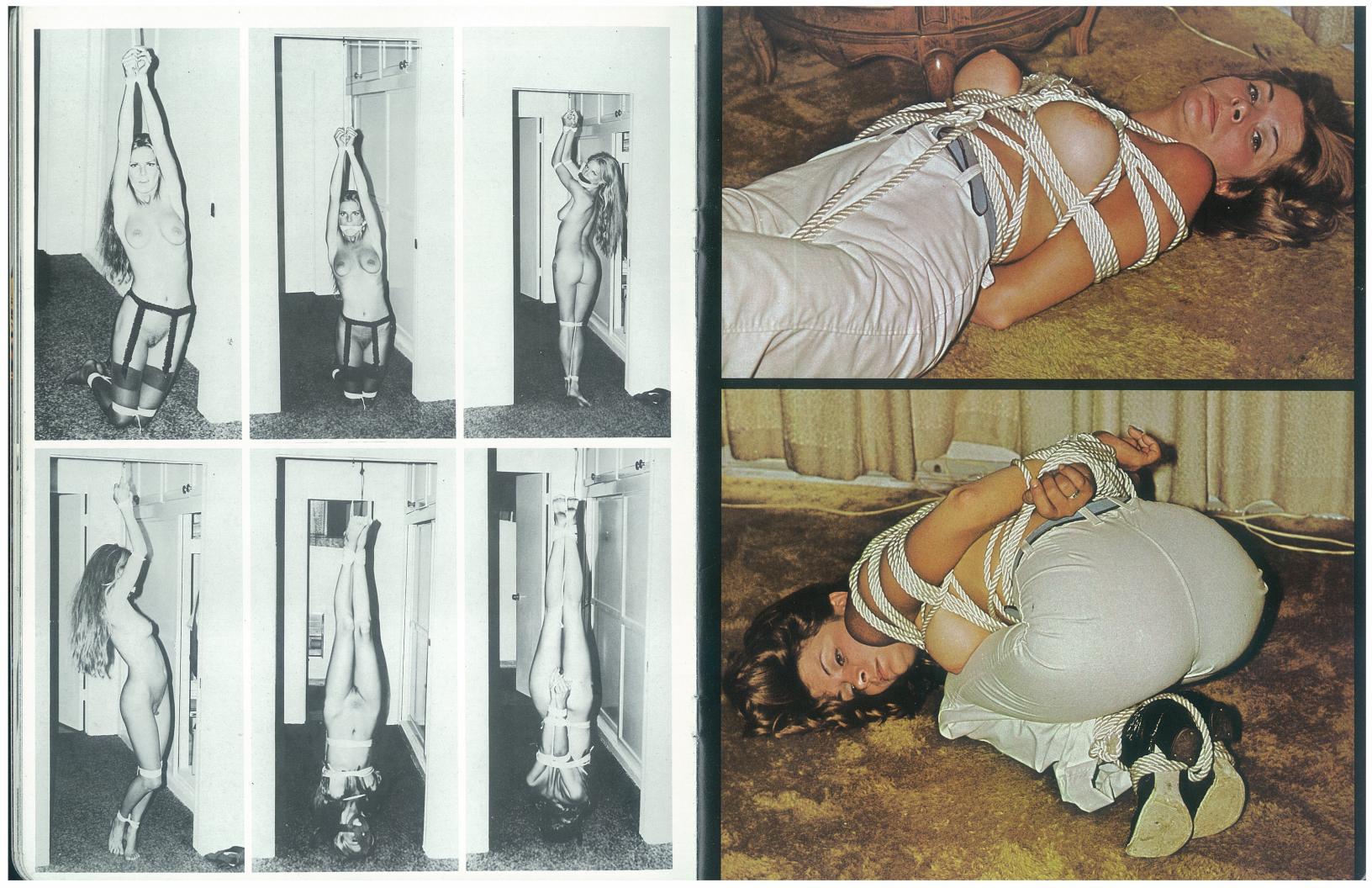
SAVAGE: Without question it was trying to constantly come up with something new. Basically there are only so many ways a girl can be tied. It was a constant strain to try to invent new bondage positions, to come up with a new fantasy, and several new ideas were needed for every magazine.

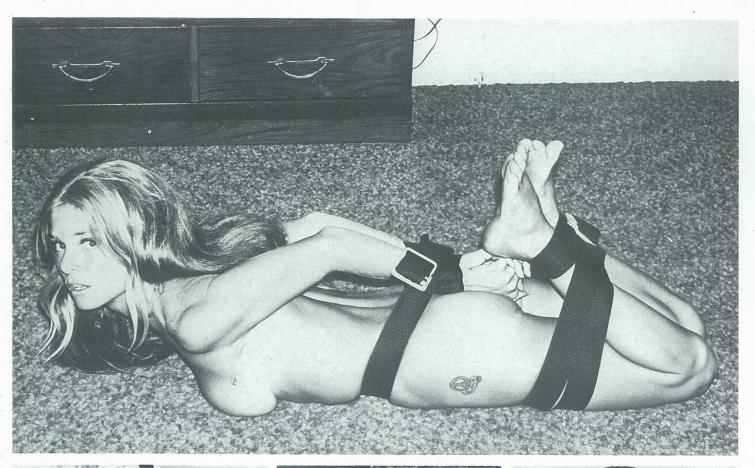
It took a real imagination to cook up new bondage. If you don't believe me, try coming up with a new, never-before-used bondage position. It always helped if you found a new face, especially if she was beautiful and had a heavenly body. But the reading public has an insatiable appetite for new ideas. I had to constantly create new fantasies and try to capture them on film. It wasn't easy, yet, when some degree of success was achieved, it was very satisfying. I guess that's the most enjoyable part of being a bondage photographer: creating a fantasy and having others enjoy it.

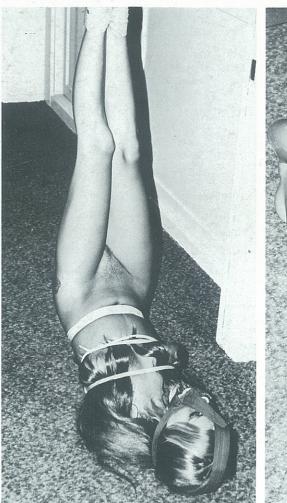






















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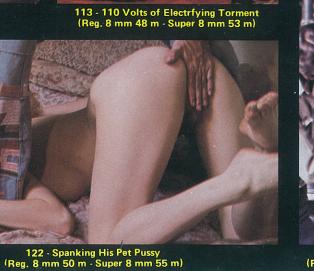


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HOM: How did you learn your distinctive style of bondage?

SAVAGE: You are right in stating that there are individual styles of binding a girl. In the early seventies there were only a few people doing bondage photography and I knew most of them. I could look at a photo and tell you who did the bondage. There are certain distinctive techniques such as type of rope, how much rope is used, the number of turns, use of cinch ropes, presence of intermediate or only one final knot, etc.

As to how my style developed, it started with John Willie. In the fifties and early sixties, when I was first exposed to bondage photos, his work was the best available. Hell, it still stands up today. But he was the true Bondage Master. I was attracted to his photos because he showed bondage that included the most important factor: she could not escape. Bondage is the creation of a helpless state. A truly helpless state was what I wanted and what I saw in John Willie's work

After I began actually tying girls and playing the games, modifications followed. Mostly they were to ensure that the bondage was escape-proof. I was amazed to find girls put into some of John Willie's positions were able to escape. I slowly came to the conclusion

















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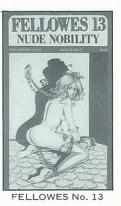
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HOM: Have you ever found any professional models who were into B&D?

SAVAGE: Of the professional models, some enjoyed being tied enough to say that they were turned on. Only a very small percent enjoyed it so much that you would say they were "into it." Most were simply doing their job.

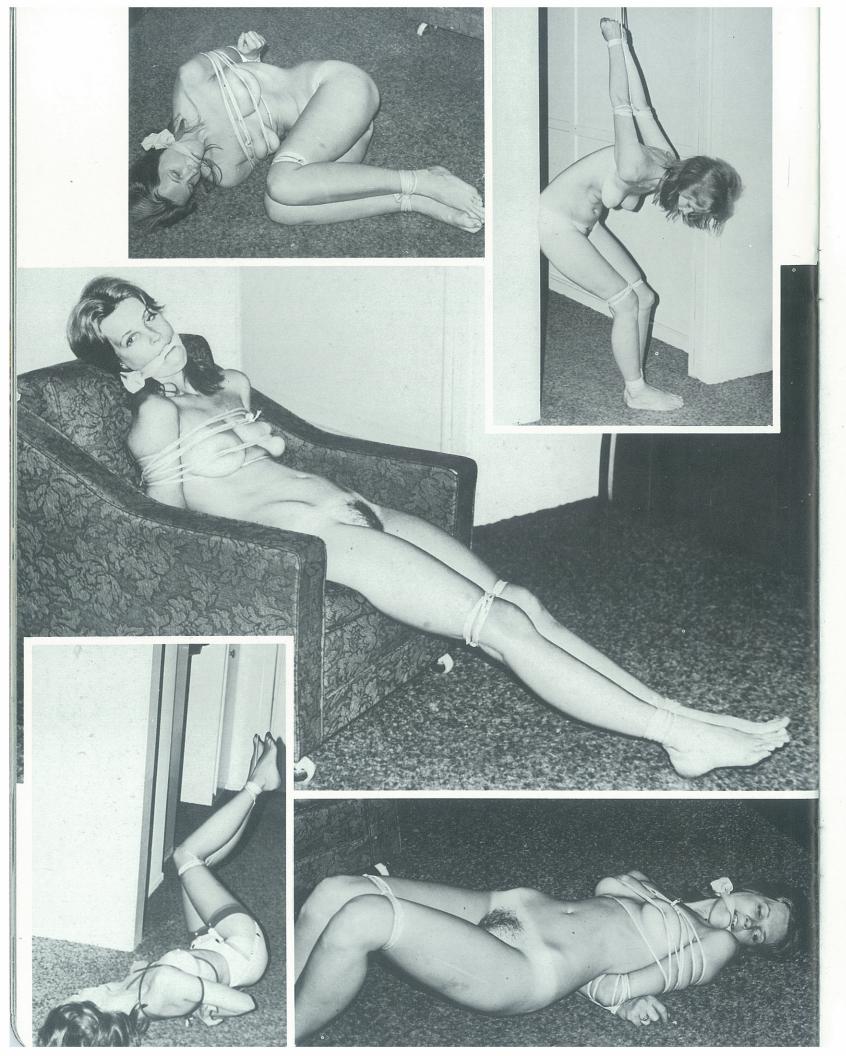
I'll have to admit, though, the few models who were into bondage in their private lives made the most interesting models and we had some wild photo sessions.

HOM: As a man who has actually tied up more women than most men ever dream of, is there any real challenge between you as the binder and the woman as an escape artist?

SAVAGE: As a general rule, no. Given no restrictions, I can tie any girl so that she can not escape. In that sense, there is no contest. I have found a great deal of variation in the ability of girls to escape from rope bondage. Some just lie there,







surrendering completely, without struggle, to any bondage put on them. Others will fight the ropes with a cunning and vigor that is surprising. I have known a number of girls who could escape from ordinary bondage. I mean the kind put on by your average man who hasn't practiced much.

My wife is a pretty good escape artist. She has surprised more than one man who thought he was pretty good at putting on the ropes. It's not that she hates being tied, quite the opposite. She hates being tied poorly. If it isn't good, strict, escape-proof bondage, she will wiggle and work for a bit, then hand you the ropes back. Of course, my wife has had lots of practice!

HOM: Are you currently active in the B&D publishing field?

SAVAGE: No. I haven't done any full time magazine work for a number of years. I have done some freelance writing and photography for a few different publishers. Also, I've been contacted about doing some videotapes. It's a very exciting medium to work in. It offers the potential of being the main medium for B&D fantasies in the future. I hope that someday I can bring some strict bondage fantasies to the TV screen.



























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HOM: Your name has been mentioned in connection with some B&D clubs. Are there really such clubs?

SAVAGE: There are. Generally they fall into two classes, the commercial and the private. The commercial ones are those you see advertised in the "adult" newspapers as "B&D parties" with the public invited. Those parties are simply money-making affairs with steep entrance fees. Twenty-five dollars a person is common and I've seen higher. Couples are generally cheaper and single girls would be free, if any ever showed up.

Another type of commercial club is the "dominance parlors." These are like massage parlors but they allow you to engage in some B&D activities such as tying the girl or giving a spanking. Or in receiving such treatment from a dominant female. Most of those places are honest and will give you something for your money even though they are expensive.







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the peptls of Prunellu

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There are a few non-commercial clubs that are free or charge only a reasonable membership fee. Generally they are open to singles and are more in the way of a discussion group than anything else. A couple of the better examples are the Society of Janus in San Francisco and the Eulenspiegel Society in New York. They have newsletters and are into the exchange of information in the S&M and B&D fields. Sometimes there are parties and demonstrations. Janus is pretty good at that.

As to truly private clubs, there are a few but they are extremely hard to find. My wife and I founded and have hosted such a club for several years. It is called the John Willie Fan Club because we wanted an innocent sounding name that also meant something to a person in the field. We run it as a totally noncommercial, social club for couples only.



